MARVEL
THE ULTIMATES
14
CAMP | FRIGERI | BLEE
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ROXXON
They must have known we were coming. How could they know...?
Who *cares?* We can take them. We've taken down *worse.*
It's an obvious trap. We'll have to delay--
C'mon, Cap-- this is *Roxxon,* not the *Hulk.* A few more hired goons with guns... we've done this a *hundred times* by now.
No. We wait and--
We need to control the junction to shut down the pipeline! I'll bet you twenty bucks it doesn't take us twenty minutes!
Twenty for twenty! Start your watch!
Hawkeye, no!
FFFTTT
FFFTTT

Valued members of the business community...thank you for coming.
ROXXON
ROXXON
ENERGY PARTNE
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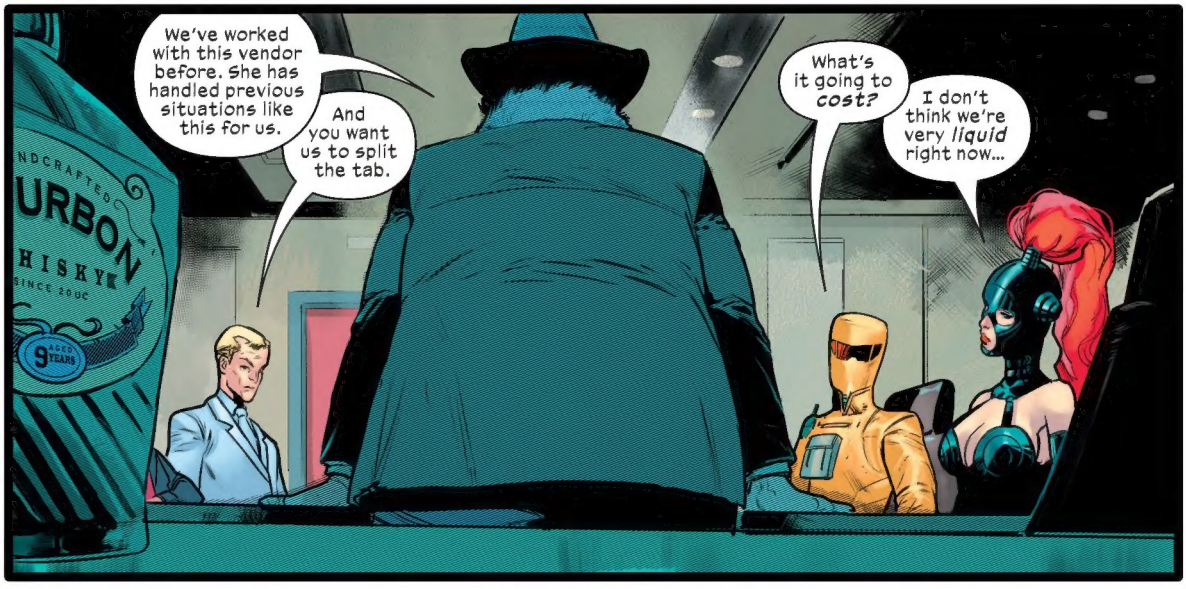
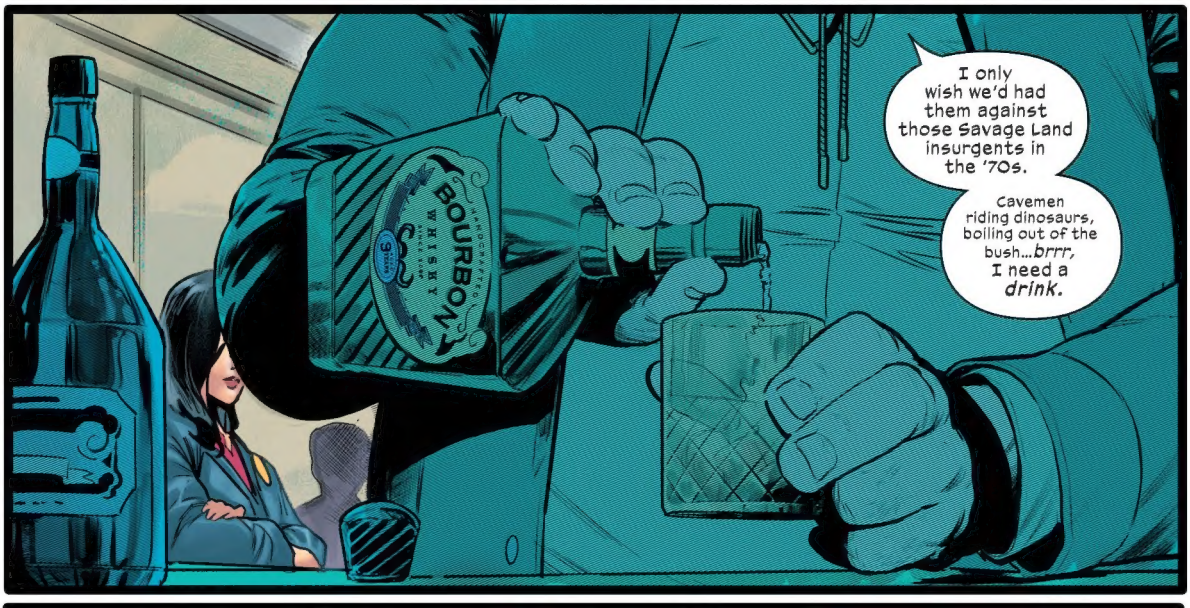
THE BIGGEST RISK TO FUTURE EARNINGS
REX BONHURST.
C.E.O. OF ROXXON ENERGY.
The people in this room control 28% of the world's wealth. As I look around, I see a table full of job creators and innovators. Leaders and problem solvers.
And that's what's brought us together today--a problem that needs solvin'. Now, I know we've traditionally been competitors. Hell, I'm pretty sure a couple of you have tried to have me killed... unsuccessfully, I'm happy to say, ha ha.
But I'm glad we could put all that aside for what's really important--the bottom line.

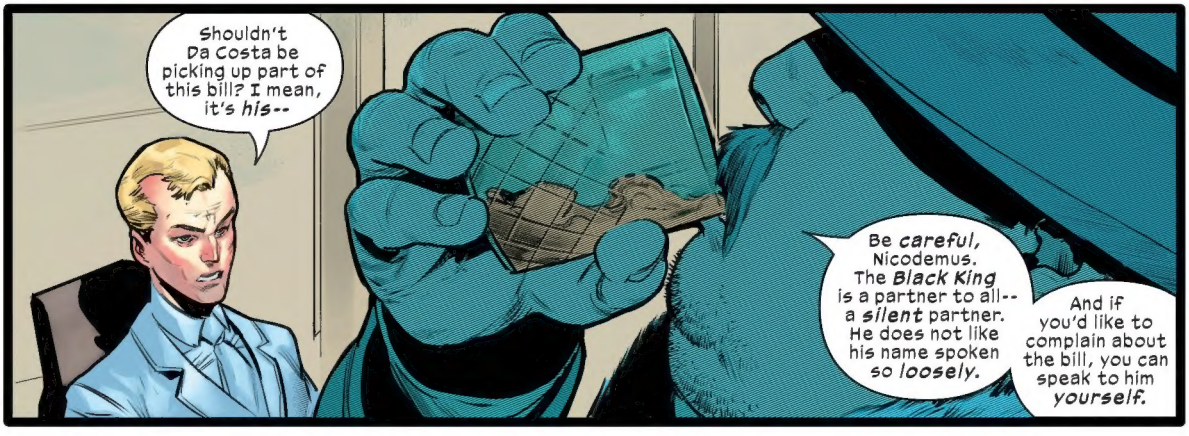
For instance: Last month, the Ultimates disseminated confidential research and proprietary protocols for Alchemax's entire line of life-extending treatments.
Now practically anyone with a kid's chemistry set and a few common precursors can make their own! Black-market generic cures for cancer and AIDS are flooding the market.
Trillions wiped out in one day!
NICODEMUS WEST.
C.M.O. OF ALCHEMAX.
Ms. Hammer. The Ultimates have been destroying your weapons-manufacturing plants all over the North American Union, crippling various war efforts abroad and decimating your margins.
Your information is out of date, Bonhurst. In the last few months, they've gone from destroying our products to stealing them.
The hypocrites plan to use our own weapons against us, while complaining that they exist!
Troubling indeed.
JUSTINE HAMMER.
C.E.O. OF HAMMER WEAPONS.
Advanced Idea Mechanics, "the everything company." Frankly, I don't understand what you do...
It's as you said, Rex. We do a bit of everything. But information technology is what worries us.
Somehow, the Ultimates have altered our algorithms remotely, greatly reducing our ability to suppress information and elevate favorable narratives across all nine major markets.
And, despite our best efforts, the Ultimates ghost-app is the most downloaded app of the week for the seventh straight week.
#1983.
ADVANCED IDEA MECHANICS SCIENTIST SUPREME.
They have their own app? How could you allow such a thing? You people made the phones, didn't you?
Starktech underlies a lot of our hardware. Hell, Howard Stark invented the language we use to program our software!
I'm concerned "Iron Lad" understands our technology better than we do.
Young Ms. Midas... The Ultimates paralyzed your father and orchestrated the violent uprising of Midas correctional facilities all over the country.
With the material and strategic support of the Ultimates, your prisons have become schools of violent revolution and your family name a laughing-stock.
I know. Hot, right?
OUBLIETTE MIDAS.
C.C.O. OF MIDAS INC.

...And, speaking for Roxxon, these terrorists, these thugs, have disabled or destroyed a significant percentage of our energy infrastructure--including pipelines, refineries, transport vehicles and fracking operations.
They've even turned the public against us, smearing us with stories of the so-called Savage Land, Broxton and other such regrettable, but unrelated, incidents.
The "average Joe" is too stupid--too limited--to understand what we all know... that, sometimes, sacrifices must be made.
Dad has a whole department of human sacrifice.
They've gone beyond vandalism. They're systematically weakening the North American Union's readiness for war. The Ultimates have become a genuine threat.
So the question is...what are we going to do about it?
What does our silent partner say?
He referred us to an associate.
An associate? Who?
Tiffany, please send her in.

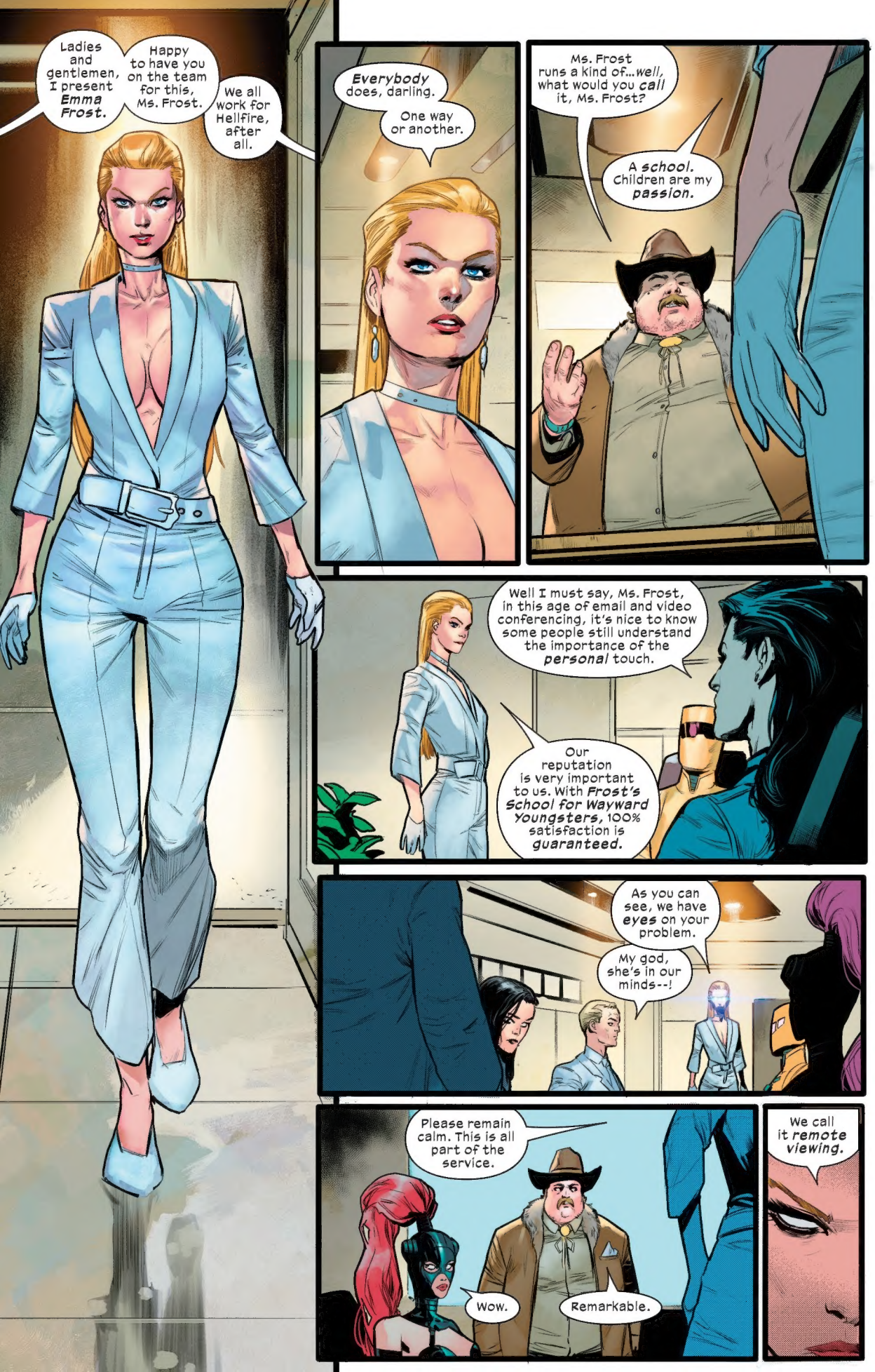

We've worked with this vendor before. She has handled previous situations like this for us.
And you want us to split the tab.
What's it going to cost?
I don't think we're very liquid right now...
9 AGED YEARS

It costs what it costs. Certainly less than we stand to lose if we don't take care of this problem quickly. But this vendor's reputation is diamond.
What her people did in Fort McMurray-- it was like bloody poetry. There's not been one word of protest since.


I only wish we'd had them against those Savage Land insurgents in the '70s.
Cavemen riding dinosaurs, boiling out of the bush...brrr, I need a drink.


Shouldn't Da Costa be picking up part of this bill? I mean, it's his--
Be careful, Nicodemus. The Black King is a partner to all-- a silent partner. He does not like his name spoken so loosely.
And if you'd like to complain about the bill, you can speak to him yourself.

5 MINUTES INTO A 20-MINUTE BET.
9 MINUTES.
14 MINUTES.
18 MINUTES.


Ladies and gentlemen, I present *Emma Frost*.
Happy to have you on the team for this, Ms. Frost.
We all work for Hellfire, after all.
Everybody does, darling.
One way or another.
Ms. Frost runs a kind of...*well*, what would you *call* it, Ms. Frost?
A *school*. Children are my *passion*.
Well I must say, Ms. Frost, in this age of email and video conferencing, it's nice to know some people still understand the importance of the *personal* touch.
Our reputation is very important to us. With *Frost's School for Wayward Youngsters*, 100% satisfaction is *guaranteed*.
As you can see, we have *eyes* on your problem.
My god, she's in our minds--!
Please remain calm. This is all part of the service.
Wow.
Remarkable.
We call it *remote viewing*.

"When will the operation begin, Ms. Frost?"
Nineteen minutes, 38 seconds. You owe me 20 bucks!
You're getting *cocky.*
"It already has. *Watch.*
Can you *blame* me?
This was a *mistake.* In war, mistakes can be *fatal.*
You *worry* too much. Look at 'em! We kicked their butts!
We were *lucky.* This could have been an amb--
"There.
"Did you *catch* it?

"Let me play it back, at around *one million frames per second.*
"*Now* do you see? That's *Pietro.*
"As he crashes into Captain America, he's moving at *four times the speed of sound.*
"Your check has *cleared,* gentlemen. All your problems are about to *disappear.*
Blink and you'll *miss* it.

"Back to your troublemaker with the arrows now, yes?
Cap?
"That's *Wanda.* When she's upset, *bad things* happen around her.
"*Unlikely* things.
"Equipment malfunctions.
"Slip-ups.
"Freak *lightning strikes.*

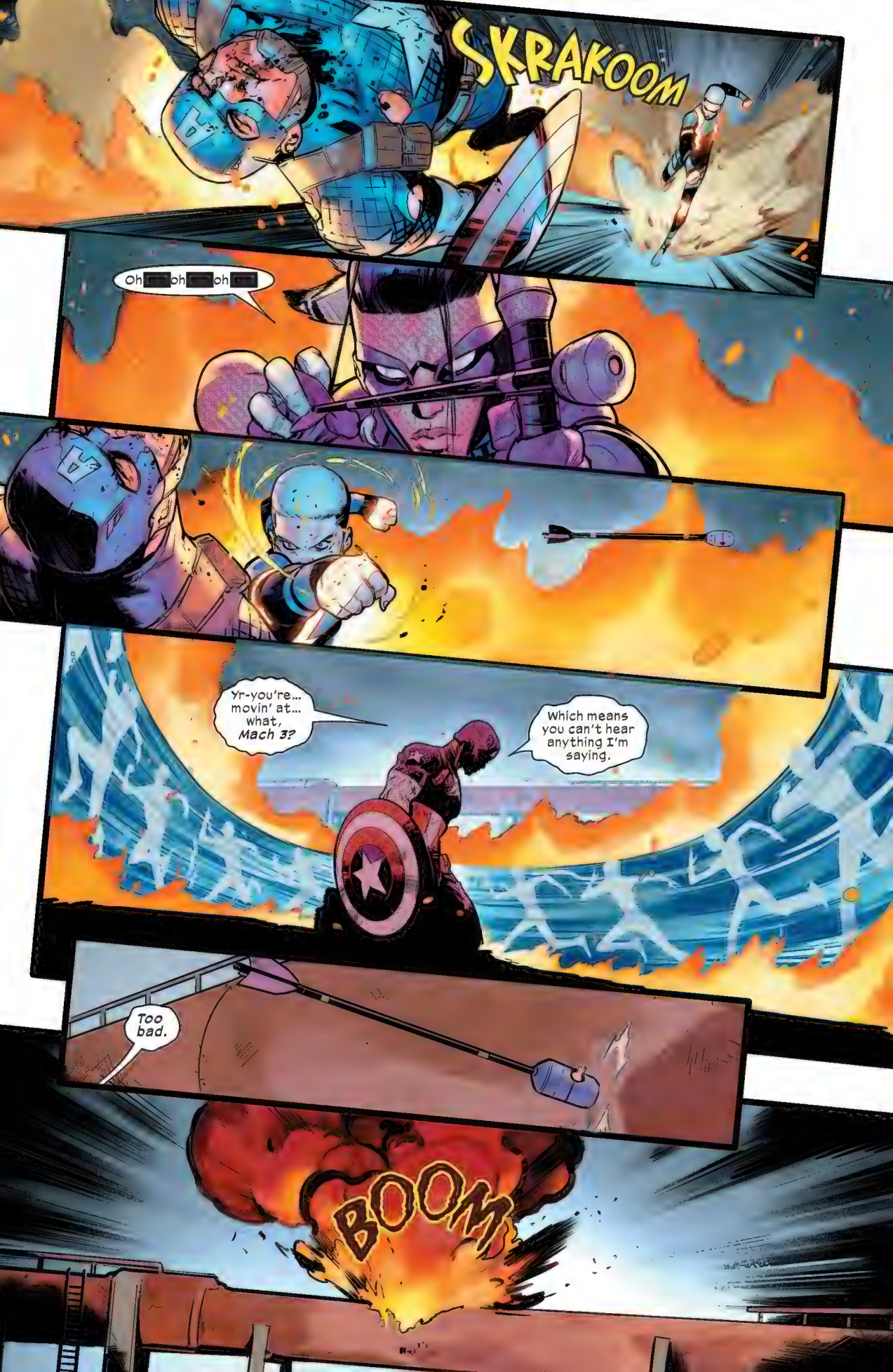
"It just gets *worse* and *worse.*"
"How long do you expect this to take?"
"Not long.
"I've been training the twins for this sort of work since before they could *walk.*
"Ever since I found them in a Eurasian *weapons lab.* Bred like dogs, and *living* like them.

TARGET LOCKED
Got y--
Finger slipped! No!
SHFFFT
C'mon, c'mon!
Aw, you're killin' me.

"Ah, Pietro is doing his victory lap.
They're playing with us!
KRAZZZACK
"It should all be over soon.
What are they?!
Just kids. You're all just kids.
But I don't see any other choice.
CRRRRRRAK
Charli--
--blow the pipeline!

What? It's still running crude--
That's the point! Take your shot, Hawkeye!
CLUNK
Ugh!
"Oh dear, he's hurt Wanda.
I--I don't know if I can! This thing's targeting systems are down!
So?
I'm actually not a great shot!
"That was a mistake.
What?!
Just because I'm Lakota doesn't mean--
No time! Take your shot, Hawk--
--kkkkkkkkkk--
"Pietro is very protective. Now he will certainly make them suffer."

UGHHHHHH!
you
do
not
touch
my
sister!


SKRAKOOM
Oh [redacted] oh [redacted] oh [redacted]
Yr-you're... movin' at... what, Mach 3?
Which means you can't hear anything I'm saying.
Too bad.
BOOM

You build up heat as you move.
You're not dissipating it-- everything you touch *burns.*
One more *weapon,* right?
Too bad.

FWHOOOOOOSH
Now, your friction field will protect you from most of the heat. Which is why you didn't even bother to dodge it.
Hh!
But all that fire's going to burn the oxygen right out of your lungs.
Take a seat, son. Catch your breath a minute.
hh!
"Pietro, my dear, sweet Pietro..."

How I'll miss the *electric jolt* I got from a pint of Pietro's blood. I've tried every drug there is--*none* hit quite like his freshly squeezed cells.
Pietro and Wanda were two of my most *promising* students. Their loss to the program will be challenging. But it was not a *total* loss...
They were all plotting against you, as you suspected. With the exception of *Ms. Midas.*
I feel...
Satisfied.
It is only their *nature* to try to take what they don't have. That ambition is useful to me. Until it isn't.
If they hadn't been scheming to take my position, I would have fired them for cause.

I am planting evidence that links their deaths to the Ultimates, and the White King is preparing a new batch of supple young C.E.O.s for your approval.
Oh yes, very satisfied.
Thank you, my Queen. If there is a silver lining to this tragedy, let us hope that it creates some much-needed sympathy for the C.E.O. class.
Billionaires are people too.
Hey! Why? Why leave *me* alive?
You all nursed fantasies of displacing Da Costa... only yours showed any promise.
You show creativity and potential, Ms. Midas, despite what your *father* says...

"...now be a good girl and I'll teach you how to take over the *world.*"
So... what are we supposed to *do* with them? Do the Ultimates *take prisoners?*
FOUR MONTHS REMAINING...

WRITER: **DENIZ CAMP**
ARTIST: **JUAN FRIGERI**

COLOR ARTIST: **FEDERICO BLEE**
LETTERER: **VC's TRAVIS LANHAM**
COVER ARTISTS: **DIKE RUAN & NEERAJ MENON**
VARIANT COVER ARTISTS: **JUAN FERREYRA; INHYUK LEE; SALVADOR LARROCA & EDGAR DELGADO**

DESIGN: **JAY BOWEN**
ASSISTANT EDITOR: **MICHELLE MARCHESE**
EDITOR: **WIL MOSS**
EDITOR IN CHIEF: **C.B. CEBULSKI**

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